

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA demands urgent intervention at Barberton Correctional Services, Mpumalanga
DATE	23 October 2026
EMBARGO	None
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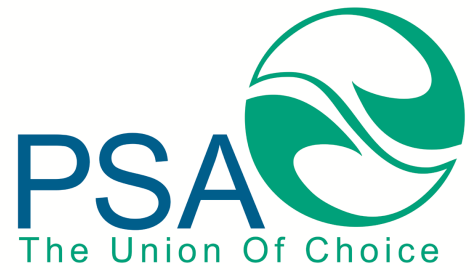
The Public Servants Association (PSA) is dismayed by unacceptable conditions faced by employees residing in the single quarters at Barberton Correctional Services in Mpumalanga, where officials have reportedly been without access to hot water for more than two years.

In August 2026, the PSA engaged the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) regarding this matter and received an undertaking that the hot-water supply would be restored by the end of that month. The PSA was, however, on 16 September 2026 informed that the appointed service provider was unable to procure the required materials and that a new service provider had subsequently been appointed. Despite these assurances, the matter remains unresolved. More than 50 employees residing in the single quarters continue to endure these inhumane living conditions. The PSA regards it as unacceptable and irresponsible for the DCS to subject employees who are expected to deliver critical public services to such prolonged neglect.

The PSA is equally alarmed by reports regarding the state of the DCS Barberton Management Area offices. According to information received, the office of the Area Commissioner has been left without essential resources, including official vehicles, furniture, and information-technology equipment. These assets were reportedly attached and removed by the Sheriff of the Court for sale at public auction in execution of an outstanding award against the DCS. Reports indicate that some employees are forced to work without proper desks and chairs. Some are utilising makeshift arrangements, including boxes, to carry out duties. Administrative personnel have allegedly been compelled to share computers with colleagues in order to perform basic work functions, severely hampering service delivery and productivity. Of further concern are allegations that employees have been threatened with disciplinary action should information regarding these conditions be disclosed to the media. Such allegations, if true, represent an attempt to silence employees and divert attention from serious operational deficiencies that require urgent intervention.

The PSA noted that the National Commissioner recently visited the Barberton Management Area. It is deeply concerning that these persistent challenges were allegedly not brought to his attention despite the severe impact on employee wellbeing and operational effectiveness. The PSA calls on the DCS to act with urgency. The DCS must provide officials with the necessary tools of trade to perform their duties effectively. Hot water must be restored to the single quarters and geysers replaced as a matter of urgency.





Public servants cannot be expected to deliver quality services under such circumstances. The PSA will hold an urgent meeting with the DCS to address these issues. The Union will continue to monitor the situation closely and hold the DCS accountable until these longstanding challenges are fully resolved.

END

